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Viewing cable 09PORTAUPRINCE554, C) FRUSTRATED AND SIDELINED, HAITIAN PRIME

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

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Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g.

#09PORTAUPRINCE554.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
09PORTAUPRINCE554	2009-06-12 19:21	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Port Au Prince

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O 121921Z JUN 09
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0023

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 000554

NOFORN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/12/2019

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SUBJECT: (C) FRUSTRATED AND SIDELINED, HAITIAN PRIME
MINISTER PIERRE-LOUIS SAYS SHE WILL RESIGN

Classified By: Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson, reason 1.5(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) In our farewell breakfast June 11, Haitian Prime

Minister Michele Pierre-Louis told me that she has "unequivocally" decided to resign. She asked that this information be closely held. Although she has set no date for submitting the resignation, she intimated that it will be soon. Increasingly frustrated and sidelined by President Preval, she believes she is no longer effective or credible as Prime Minister. While she has yet to inform the president and has not discussed her decision with her inner circle, Pierre-Louis emphatically stated that she will not change her mind. The decision is made, she reiterated, what remains to be determined are the modalities. I strongly urged the Prime Minister to reconsider, reminding her of the urgency of her agenda and her very real success in touching the average Haitian and putting a face on government, as well as her strong appearance at the Donors Conference. MPL expressed pride in those accomplishments, but reiterated that her mind is made up.

12. (C) MPL said that her complicated relationship with Preval, a friend of more than 30 years, has worsened significantly in the past two months. As evidence, she said that he no longer takes her phone calls. He has stopped her from accepting invitations to visit key donors and has tried to limit her movement around the country. She is not included in his meetings with ministers, nor was she privy to key economic decisions including the privatization of Teleco, plans to privatize APN and EDH, and proposed road and development projects. She has been kept out of the minimum wage issue discussions now underway in the palace. MPL described how the President ridiculed her plans to focus on developing the long-neglected region of Haiti's northern shore in the coming year's budget, a proposal widely supported by the cabinet. After the proposal was tabled, she said, Preval told a cabinet meeting that the purpose of the budget is to build roads. The final straw, Pierre-Louis said, was Preval's cavalier treatment of the FOKAL incident last week when student demonstrators attacked the NGO in which she had worked for more than 20 years. "The President knows," she said, "how important that organization is to me, how I built it up in Haiti, and he never once asked about it and its people. He just joked."

13. (C) This is a Preval, Pierre Louis says, that she no longer recognizes. If he does indeed have a vision for Haiti, he is not willing to share it. She is highly suspicious of the President's motives in managing the minimum wage debate, noting that he has rejected suggestions from all sides to come to some decision and respond to the bill, by signing it or detailing his concerns. She strongly believes that Preval is using this issue as the proximate cause to maneuver her out, even though she has little influence on the matter. MPL has decided that she won't stay around and "be a Jacques Edouard (Alexis)". She will leave herself and go abroad for a while. Pierre-Louis suggested that the relationship started deteriorating when she returned from the Donors Conference in Washington. "He tried to stop me from going...he didn't want me to go to the Conference at all, he wanted his staff to attend, and he was angry at my reception in Washington" but she refused to characterize the President's reaction as jealousy, only saying that he clearly wants someone else in her place.

14. (C) If she indeed is set on resigning, I urged the PM to carefully consider the timing of the announcement so as to not give the impression that she has been forced out by the demonstrators. MPL was sensitive to this issue. I also noted that it was in no one's interest to have a protracted political stalemate over her replacement. She intends to give Preval the time to select and nominate a new candidate. She suggested that Minister of Plan Bellerive or Minister of Agriculture Gue were waiting in the wings. Bellerive, she thought, would be a good choice; as for Gue, she said, "he wants the job so badly he can taste it." She added that Preval had appeared to be grooming his old friend and development advisor Robert Estime; however, with his new job (as a USAID contractor), she wasn't sure where he stood. That being said, she reiterated, she would not wait forever for her successor. It is, MPL said, time to go.

5 (C) Comment. Pierre-Louis has come close to resignation at least twice before in her difficult 9 month tenure as Prime Minister and had to be talked back into the job. Sustained by her very deep affection for Haiti and her belief that she could find a way to work with her friend and former business partner, President Preval, Pierre-Louis gamely took on a job she neither sought nor particularly enjoys. Preval originally told interlocutors that he was pleased to have an old friend at the helm of the Primature. However, the relationship badly - and very visibly - faltered, undermined in part by Preval's tendency to micromanage and his refusal to give MPL a space to govern. Pierre-Louis herself has been hampered by a poorly organized, ineffectual office, mediocre staff and lack of an independent political base. With her circle of activity increasingly circumscribed, and the political long knives now out, the Prime Minister's frustrations are very real. While she may indeed hold off resigning for a while, I doubt she can be talked back into the job this time.

SANDERSON